

## Prescription Drug Misuse in Missouri in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders



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The 2016 Missouri Student Survey asked a series of questions around prescription drug misuse. Of those students in 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 14.5% said they had misused prescription drugs at least once in their lifetime while 10.1% said that they had done so in the past 30 days. While data is not available for the entire age range, the percentage of Missouri high school students reporting lifetime misuse is lower than the national numbers for the same age groups<sup>1</sup>.

Prescription drugs were most commonly sourced when a family member (31.0%) or friend (13.0%) gave it to them. A little over 1 in 10 students (13.6%) took the medication without permission.

Of those who reported misusing prescription drugs, pain (51.5%) and sleeping medication (25.8%) were most common.

When asked why they were misusing these substances, students reported the following reasons:

	Endorsed
To reduce and/or manage pain	35.2%
To help me sleep	26.2%
To help with stress	19.9%
To help me feel better or happier	15.9%
To increase my energy	9.6%
To have a good time	8.4%
Curiosity	5.8%
To improve academic performance	5.6%
To help with weight loss	2.8%
To fit in with friends	1.0%

Note that the percentages above are also out of those who have misused prescription drugs in their lifetime. The reasons “to reduce / manage pain” and “help with sleep” correspond with the medications students most commonly report taking.

<sup>1</sup> Missouri Student Survey Report, 2016 <http://dmh.mo.gov/ada/mobhew/docs/2016mssreport.pdf>